

**DELAWARE COMMISSION OF VETERANS AFFAIRS
MEETING MINUTES
SEPTEMBER 27, 2005**

Members Present: Thompson, Carroll, Endres, Ennis, Harden, Kitson, Lank, Lardizzone, Magner, Morris, Newstadt, Spitzfaden, Timberman, Wasson and Webb

Staff Present: Davila

Guests: Jack Houck (DELVETS), Ed Moczulski (LP Lo-DEL), Burton Barr (NARFE), and Dean Reid (Veterans Home Administrator-in Training)

The meeting opened with the Pledge of Allegiance to our Nations Flag.

Chairman Thompson opened the meeting by requesting that all Commissioners wear their blazers for the next meeting so a group picture may be taken. He reported that letters of appreciation had been sent to each of the Commission staff members who assisted in the Veterans Home Groundbreaking Ceremony. The letter of appreciation for the City of Milford has not been sent yet because we are waiting on a plaque to be made.

Mr. Barr reported that this would be his last meeting until February 2006. Mr. Moczulski reported that there have been a lot of rumors about a developer buying the land that the Home of the Brave is on. They were approached last September by the developer and told them the only way they would leave the property is if they were set-up in a turn key operation. He discussed what they wanted from a new building and assured everyone that he would report back when something developed.

Chairman Thompson reported that four Commissioners visited with the Governor and spoke to her again about the Veterans Commission having oversight of the new Veterans Home, and she is still not committed. He is planning for the same group to meeting with Rep. Spence to discuss the issue with him.

Mr. Reid, the new Veterans Home Administrator-in Training, introduced himself and provided a brief biography. He offered an update on the progression of the Veterans Home. He stated that he would like to attend future meetings to provide updates. Mr. Reid answered questions from the Commissioners and explained his intentions as the Administrator. Mr. Davila discussed their future trip to Tennessee to visit the State's veterans homes.

**MOTION BY ENNIS TO ACCEPT AUGUST COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES, SECONDED BY HARDEN,
MOTION CARRIED.**

COMMITTEE REPORTS

CEMETERY COMMITTEE

Commissioner Newstadt reported that the next Family Advisory Cemetery Committee (FACC - New Castle County) meeting is scheduled for October 11, 2005, 6:00 PM. The next FACC (Sussex County) meeting is scheduled for October 24, 2005, 6:00 PM.

COMMEMORATIVE AFFAIRS

Commissioner Lank reported that final arrangements are being made for the Veterans Day Ceremony at the Bridge.

HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

Commissioner Carroll reported that the total in the Veterans Home fund is \$153,990.49. Mr. Davila stated that the \$100,000 in the fund that will go for construction has not been taken out yet. The next Veterans Home Steering Committee meeting will be on October 5, 2005, at the Commission office. Commissioner Newstadt had questions about the running of the proposed canteen and Mr. Davila gave an explanation and discussion followed. Commissioner Ennis questions if the facility will be a nursing home or a veteran's home. Mr. Davila clarified that it will be a long-term care facility and explained the criteria.

LEGISLATIVE AFFAIRS

Commissioner Lardizzone reported that the legislators reneged on helping them with getting E-Z pass for the veterans' organizations. The Grant and Aid requests now require a financial audit by a CPA to be considered.

PERSONNEL

Commissioner Lardizzone reported that the position for Conservation Tech at the Northern Cemetery and the new Service Officer position for New Castle Co. have been posted. There was discussion about the location for the new service officer.

MONUMENTS & MEMORIALS

Chairman Thompson commented that the three designs submitted for the WWII memorial were in the Commission lobby. The Commission took a break to review the designs while Mr. Davila explained each one. The majority decided on the design submitted by Robert Eccleston.

ORGANIZATIONAL REPORTS

Newstadt (JWV) – Presented a check for \$1,000 on behalf of the JWV for the Veterans Home fund. The organization's total contributions for the Veterans Home fund is now \$13,000.

Spitzfaden (MOAA) – The annual Convention will be November 19, 2005, in San Antonio, TX.

Wasson (DELVETS) – The ladies held a spaghetti dinner with entertainment and it was well attended. The building renovations have been structurally completed, but there is still a lot of furnishing to do.

Harden (WAVES) – The regular quarterly meeting was held on September 10, 2005. She helped to serve a luncheon for the POWs and MIAs for the VA Hospital, which was well attended. The VA Hospital is celebrating their 75th Anniversary on October 20, 2005.

Kitson (VFW) – On October 9, 2005, the VFW will be participating in the Pulaski Day Parade in Wilmington. The parade kicks off at 2:00 PM and will be up in Brown Town. October 22, 2005, is "Make a Difference Day" to be held at the VFW Post 6483 in Milford. He invites everyone on the Commission to come down. The Red, White and Blue Gala at Dover Sheraton, which is a gala for Operation Uplink, will be on November 12, 2005. Everyone is invited.

Morris (American Legion) – The American Legion is going to work hard again to support the State Reserve and Guard Units that are out and make sure they have constant contact with the home front.

Commissioner Harden complimented Commissioner Morris for the article he wrote for the American Legion paper.

Thompson (MCL) – Beginning in November, all of the MCL detachments will be starting up the "Toys for Tots" campaign and it will run until December 22 or 23, 2005.

Lardizzone (DAV) – DAV signed a Letter of Understanding in Washington, DC, stating that all DAV departments and chapters will support the National Guard and Reserve units. He will be going to school next week to be recertified as a department service officer. To date, the DAV has provided \$1.5 M to DAV members in the Gulf region.

Carroll (MOPH) – The Department meeting will be held on Saturday, October 10, 2005, 11:00 AM, at the Wayside Inn in Smyrna. The New Castle Chapter 9377 voted last week to contribute \$500, plus \$100 from a member, to the National MOPH organization, which has put together a fund to assist Purple Hearters in the Gulf region.

Magner (AMVETS) – Most of the posts have been inactive and have just started back up again in September. Post 100 is involved with the turkeys again this year in conjunction with Post 1183 of Newark. They will be providing over 200 turkeys that will go to the VA and other shelters around Delaware, New Jersey, Maryland, and Pennsylvania. They are actively raising money for that now.

Ennis (KWVA) – KWVA had their annual picnic on September 17, 2005, at Brecknock Park. An Executive Council meeting is scheduled for October 7, 2005, at the American Legion Post 2 in Dover. The National Convention will be October 10-14, 2005, in New York.

Lank (MOWW) – Two of their members attended the National Convention. In September, two ROTC instructors from the University of Delaware came and spoke with us; they did a really good job. Anyone involved in ROTC should have those guys come and speak to your group.

Endres (40 & 8) – Delaware will be hosting this year's Mid-Atlantic Association Mid-Winter Cheminot on November 4-6, 2005, in Dover. Representatives from New York, Pennsylvania, West Virginia, Maryland, New Jersey, District of Columbia, and Georgia will be in attendance.

Mr. Davila reminded the organizations that when they make changes and elect new officers, please inform the office of those changes.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

Chairman Thompson made reference to a letter that each Commissioner received about the flags at the Northern Cemetery and asked for comments. Discussion followed. Mr. Davila reported that there is a tri-annual review scheduled for November 1, 2005. The head of the State Cemetery Grants Program and another individual who is an expert on how cemeteries are administered across the country will visit and look at those things we have or haven't done and we will provide them with a report of how we operate. Mr. Davila explained some of the improvements that have taken place or are scheduled to take place. Discussion followed.

MOTION BY NEWSTADT TO PLACE THE FLAGS IN THE APPROPRIATE AREA ON CONNOR CIRCLE TO ENHANCE THE REAR AREA OF THE CEMETERY, SECONDED BY WEBB, MOTION CARRIED.

NEW BUSINESS

ELECTIONS

Commissioner Lardizzone opened the floor for Chairman nominations.

Thompson nominated for Chairman by Newstadt. Morris nominated for Chairman by Magner.

The floor was closed for nominations; votes collected. New Chairman - Morris.

Commissioner Lardizzone opened the floor for Vice-Chairman nominations.

Kitson nominated for Vice-Chairman by Webb. Ennis nominated for Vice-Chairman.

The floor was closed for nominations; votes collected. New Vice-Chairman – Ennis.

ITEMS FOR THE GOOD AND WELFARE OF THE ORGANIZATION

Commissioner Carroll reiterated that the VA is having their 75th Anniversary Celebration on October 20, 2005, at 2:00 PM in the VA lobby and everyone is invited.

DATE OF NEXT MEETING: OCTOBER 25, 2005 (11:00 AM)

**LOCATION: Robbins Bldg, 802 Silver Lake Blvd, Suite 100
Dover, DE**

ADJOURNED